

VZCZCXRO1376  
RR RUEHAG RUEHDF RUEHLZ  
DE RUEHRL #1469/01 3221128  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
R 181128Z NOV 09  
FM AMEMBASSY BERLIN  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 5825  
INFO RHEHAAA/WHITE HOUSE WASHINGTON DC  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC  
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHINGTON DC  
RUCNFRG/FRG COLLECTIVE  
RUEHBS/AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS 1736  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 0453  
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 0969  
RUEHRO/AMEMBASSY ROME 2479  
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO 1495  
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE 0668  
RHMFIUU/HQ USAF RAMSTEIN AB GE  
RHMFISS/HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE//J5 DIRECTORATE (MC)//  
RHMFISS/CDRUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GE  
RUKAAKC/UDITDUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GE

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 05 BERLIN 001469

STATE FOR INR/R/MR, EUR/PAPD, EUR/PPA, EUR/CE, INR/EUC, INR/P,  
SECDEF FOR USDP/ISA/DSAA, DIA FOR DC-4A

VIENNA FOR CSBM, CSCE, PAA

"PERISHABLE INFORMATION -- DO NOT SERVICE"

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [US](#) [AF](#) [KGHG](#) [EU](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: U.S.-IRAN, AFGHANISTAN, CLIMATE, EU,  
CORRUPTION;BERLIN

- ¶1. Lead Stories Summary
- ¶2. (U.S.-China) Obama Visit
- ¶3. (Afghanistan) Debate Over Troop Withdrawal
- ¶4. (Environment) Climate Change
- ¶5. (EU) Future Top Jobs
- ¶6. (Transparency International) New Ranking

#### ¶1. Lead Stories Summary

Print media opened with reports on the student protests, the closed-door meeting of the government at Meseberg Castle, and the trouble Chancellor Merkel is having with the Association of Expellees. Editorials focused on a decision by the Constitutional Court which banned Neo-Nazi rallies if they attempt to praise or portray the Nazi regime positively. ZDF-TV's early evening newscast heute opened with a report on the students' protests, while ARD-TV's early evening newscast Tagesschau opened with a story on the Cabinet's closed-door meeting at Meseberg Castle.

#### ¶2. (U.S.-China) Obama Visit

Frankfurter Allgemeine (11/18) editorialized: "China is strong and will become even stronger. Its action is inevitable to overcome the

economic crisis. The call of the American President on Beijing's leaders to play a greater role in the world is therefore right....

Given the many problems, it is striking that Hu Jintao opposed protectionist policies. This is [also] right and justified because

the virus of protectionism is spreading in America. However, it also reveals China's vulnerability. The country needs open markets to

generate high growth rates necessary to keep the social situation under control. So who is dependent on whom?"

Sddeutsche (11/18) opined: "In China, Barack Obama was given a lesson on the limits of power. For the last 20 years, the U.S. enjoyed almost unqualified freedom of action. This period is now coming to an end. Open rivalry has not yet broken out between U.S. and China....

The power struggle is no longer fought by military forces, but in a more subtle way on oil fields, in climate conferences, and in an ideological competition. This is the most important lesson of his first trip to China: he was denied access to the people. Obama's message did not reach them because he could not communicate freely and because he limited himself. Obama accepted self-censorship and thus admitted that China is already too powerful for the American President to go unpunished if he gives lectures and makes demands."

Under the headline "Paralyzed giants," Berliner Zeitung (11/18) editorialized: "During their summit, the two world leaders demonstrated an image of impotence. Obama and Hu could not reach any successful agreements, either on exchange rates, trade manipulation,

climate protection, or in the nuclear conflicts with Iran and North

BERLIN 00001469 002 OF 005

Korea. Although both sides agree that the big problems of the world cannot be resolved if they don't cooperate, it does not mean that both aim in the same direction. However powerful Obama and Hu might appear, their leeway for action is small. As most world leaders, they have to serve their people at home and must demonstrate that they can defy their rival and achieve their maximum demands in the supposed national interest."

13. (Afghanistan) Debate Over Troop Withdrawal

Die Welt (11/18) carried a lengthy report under the headline: "Gold for the Taliban - New UK Strategy for Afghanistan: Enemies to be Bribed - NATO Leader Demands Concrete Jobs." It wrote: "The new field manual presented by the chief strategist of the British armed forces is London's answer to the legendary report of NATO's supreme commander in Afghanistan, General McChrystal.... In many respects, the British are following the military civilian strategy of the Americans...but her Majesty's strategists are emphasizing buying much more cooperation from Taliban fighters with money, i.e. to bribe them.... The field manual recommends to the British commanders to pay the men in the embattled areas a higher salary than the Taliban offer. Indeed, the Americans successfully implemented this strategy in Iraq and bought allies. It is true that the British paper only recommends to use such payments in the framework of a long-term development plan but it is questionable which effects such payments have on the social reconstruction in Afghanistan."

Tagesspiegel (11/18) headlined: "Speedy Withdrawal," and wrote: "With

a clear shift in foreign policy, Prime Minister Gordon Brown not only called for a timetable in his annual foreign policy basic speech in Mansion House, but he also called for the beginning of a handover [of responsibility to the Afghan forces] next year. Thus far, this has been demanded at the earliest in 2011. Brown also offered London as the site for an Afghanistan conference. He wants to put on the agenda of such a meeting the debate over a political strategy which is to redefine the military goals. In the beginning of an election year, Brown is under pressure to name a date for the start of a British troop withdrawal."

Under the headline: "Verbal Rearguard Action," Financial Times Deutschland (11/18) wrote: "Only a while ago, the whole world talked about NATO troop enforcements for Afghanistan, but now we are reading in newswire reports more about a partial withdrawal. But this is BERLIN 00001469 003 OF 005

wishful thinking. Has the most powerful military alliance in the world carried out a sudden change of strategies? Does this mean that General Stanley McChrystal's demand for an additional 40,000 soldiers has been swept aside? None of those interpretations is right. Indeed, NATO Secretary Fogh Rasmussen and the new German Defense Minister zu Guttenberg only said that, in a few districts, the responsibility for security should, if possible, be handed over to the Afghan army and the police force. Indeed, there are districts that are rather peaceful, and these are areas which hardly have any Pashtun population. But the Taliban movement stems from Pashtun tribes in Afghanistan and Pakistan. That is why diplomats and military officials consider the conclusion that one can withdraw from Afghanistan as a whole to be fallacious. The commotion about the new debate is rather derived from unease about the Afghanistan war in many NATO nations and from the fact that many politicians want to give assurances to their voters that the mission will not last forever.

NATO will speak of a withdrawal only if they can sell Afghanistan as a kind of success, but this is something no one dares to do in the foreseeable future."

Regional daily Mnchener Merkur (11/18) judged: "It is high time to break the taboo over terms such as pullout and withdrawal and to call things by their names. NATO Secretary General Rasmussen, who, a few weeks ago, defiantly said NATO troops would stay as long as necessary, has now begun to seek an emergency exit. And British Foreign Secretary David Miliband followed the well-tested proverb that it is necessary to ally with those who cannot be defeated. He wants to integrate the Taliban into the Afghan government. Still, victories look different. The allies will not run away, and one reason is that handing over security responsibilities presupposes having police and armed forces that can guarantee security. But thus far, there is no sign of that happening."

#### 14. (Environment) Climate Change

Spiegel Online (11/17) carried a lengthy negative editorial on President Obama's climate policy. Under the headline "Obama Has Failed the World on Climate Change, Spiegel's Christian Schwögerl editorialized: "President Barack Obama came to office promising hope

and change. But on climate change, he has followed in the footsteps of his predecessor, George W. Bush. Now, should the climate summit in Copenhagen fail, the blame will lie squarely with Obama.... Over the weekend, Obama announced that there would be no agreement on binding

rules in Copenhagen. It was the admission of a massive failure -- and the prelude to a truly dramatic phase of international climate

BERLIN 00001469 004 OF 005

policy.... Obama has neglected the single most important issue for an American president who likes to imagine himself as a world citizen,

namely, his country's addiction to fossil fuels and the risks of unchecked climate change. Health-care reform and other domestic issues

were more important to him than global environmental threats.... The U.S. is quite happy to see itself as the leader of the Western world.

But when it comes to climate change, America has once again failed miserably -- for the umpteenth time. If the rest of the world were to

follow the US example in their approach to fossil fuels, the oceans

would not only heat up, but would probably soon begin to boil.

American per capita CO2 emissions are about twice as high as those in comparable industrialized nations and many times greater than those of the developing world.... Obama's priorities are wrong. Copenhagen is

not just any old summit -- it is the long-awaited climax of many years

of negotiations whose failure was only averted at the last minute at the Bali summit two years ago.... Obama was quite happy to make the

trip to Copenhagen in October to support his hometown Chicago's bid

to host the Olympic Games. But he is currently leaving open the question of whether he will come to the Danish capital in December for the UN

Climate Change Conference. In doing so, he has given other world leaders the signal that they do not need to attend. If the Copenhagen

summit, which energy strategists and environmentalists have been preparing for two years, is a failure, then it will mainly be Obama's

fault.... Obama has proven himself to be unable to put an end to the

lies that modern American society is based on. He is unable to overcome the entrenched lobbyists of the oil and coal industries and

make the reality clear to his compatriots: They are the worst energy

wasters on the planet -- and are thus, indirectly, a major threat to

world peace in the 21st century.... The Nobel Committee should

postpone the award ceremony for the Nobel Peace Prize from December 10 to December 20. Only if Obama has achieved a convincing deal at the Copenhagen conference will there be a real reason to honor him."

Tageszeitung (11/18) commented: "In China, President Obama has reached the limits of his superpower. He is returning without the hoped for promise on climate protection. The many words cannot obscure the fact that Hu and Obama remained vague on Copenhagen and did not promise any specific reduction limits of greenhouse gases."

#### 15. (EU) Future Top Jobs

BERLIN 00001469 005 OF 005

"European Parliament Involved in Poker Game About Future Jobs," headlined Financial Times Deutschland (11/18) and reported: "The President of the European Parliament, Jerzey Busek is pressing the 27 EU member states not to postpone a decision on vacant top EU positions. He told FTD shortly before Thursday's special EU summit:

'We have been discussing for more than nine years draft agreements.

Now the time has come to decide and to begin with our work. Europe is faced with enormous challenges - climate change, the economic crisis, and energy security.' With this appeal the EP president is criticizing the tough talk regarding who would become European Council president and European foreign minister. But thus far, a solution has not been in the offing in the talks between the Swedish EU presidency and the various capitals. EU Minister President Cecilia Malmström said on Tuesday: 'There is total confusion, and there has been no agreement.' She did not rule out an extension of the summit or even a postponement."

#### 16. (Transparency International) New Ranking

In a story under the headline: "Europe has Become More Corrupt," Die Welt (11/18) wrote: "When it comes to fighting corruption and bribery, Germany is still a modestly average European country. On the corruption index of Transparency International, Germany is 14th, the same position it had last year. Corruption rarely happens in Denmark, New Zealand, Singapore and Sweden. However, the situation is devastating in Somalia, Afghanistan, Burma, Sudan, and Iraq. The index is based on interviews with managers and experts who were asked of how corrupt the public service in their countries is. Since the interviews last year, the susceptibility of many European countries for corruption has considerably increased. Especially Greece, Spain, and Latvia have lost. i.e. those countries which have been hard hit by the financial crisis. But it is not clear whether the financial crisis promotes corruption or whether the financial crisis has imply resulted in bringing to the fore such corruption cases."

MURPHY